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C O N F I D E N T I A L OTTAWA 002702

SIPDIS

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SUBJECT: CANADIAN VIEWS ON CONTINUING MOMENTUM FOR HAITIAN ELECTIONS

REF: STATE 165009

Classified By: Polmincouns Brian Flora, reasons 1.4 (b) and (d)

1. (C) Poloff delivered reftel demarche September 8 to DG for the Caribbean, Central American and the Andes Christian LaPointe, who also introduced members of a newly created office on Haiti. He explained that Foreign Affairs Canada finally accepted that Haiti was going to be a significant issue for a long time and they needed to have personnel dedicated to it. The new director for Haiti in FAC will be Ginette Martin, former DCM in Guatemala. LaPointe stressed that Canada's vital and sustaining role in the Haitian democratization process will continue. Canada will work with and through the UN and its organizations, the crucial Haitian Diaspora, the French, the European Union and model Caribbean nations to support the CEP in its realization of free and fair elections.

Election Glass Half Full

2. (C) LaPointe understood our concern with the pace of CEP progress in preparing for elections, but preferred to see the glass as half full, not half empty. He reflected back on the time just a few months ago when there were just 100,000 voters registered and only a handful of voter registration stations. Now there are 2 million registered at 450 stations and 65 parties, including Lavalas, registered to participate (not quite Italy yet, he mused, but getting there). He was cautiously optimistic that the CEP would pull things together in time for a successful conclusion, but agreed that the international community needs to keep up a high level of support, encouragement, and cajoling to get there. He also commended recent progress on the security front as a required corollary.

UNGA Sep. 14 Ministerial

3. (C) LaPointe said the GOC would be open to discussions on how to strengthen the CEP at the September 14 ministerial, which would be attended by either Minister Pettigrew or CIDA Director Carroll. He did not commit to bringing strong support to a more active UN effort in the elections, however, expressing satisfaction with the current division of labor between the UN and OAS. Lapointe said that the GoC wants to balance the need for Haitian ownership of the process and outcome, with the equally vital need for international support to ensure transparency and proper implementation. He also reiterated Canada's long-term commitment to supporting the permanent electoral council when the provisional council has done its work. The GoC, recognizing the importance of good governance and institution building, hopes to work collaboratively with members of the expatriate Haitian community to encourage the creation of an ombudsman, for example, among whose responsibilities would be the safeguarding of the new democratic order.⁸ Lapointe stressed the vital role that the Diaspora could play if properly encouraged.

Elections Canada Official to Visit Port-au-Prince (PaP)

4. (C) Chief Electoral Officer of Canada Jean-Pierre Kingsley will meet with the Canadian Ambassador to Haiti September 9 in preparation for an upcoming visit to PaP, in which he will take a message of strong support for the CEP. Mr. LaPointe encouraged all foreign governments to send the same message.

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